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FROM: Brussels
TO : Secretary of State
NO : 654, April 21, 5 p.m.

Control 8491
Rec'd April 21, 1950
2:52 p.m.

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Belgian political crisis seems to be drawing to a head after 40 days of stalemate. Following Leopold's address to nation April 15 (EMBTEL 618, April 15), conferences have been in constant progress between leaders three principal parties. Van Zeeland has agreed on behalf PSC to pledge in writing that after Parliament applies law of July 19, 1945 and determines that King is no longer under impossibility of reigning, he will then request both Chambers to enact a law delegating his powers temporarily to heir apparent.

Two main issues remain and are now in process of political bargaining:

1. If and when King delegates his powers to Prince Baudouin, will Leopold remain physically in Belgium, or must he reside outside country?

2. Under what conditions should "temporary" delegation of power to Prince Baudouin be terminated?

First issue,

755.11/4-2150

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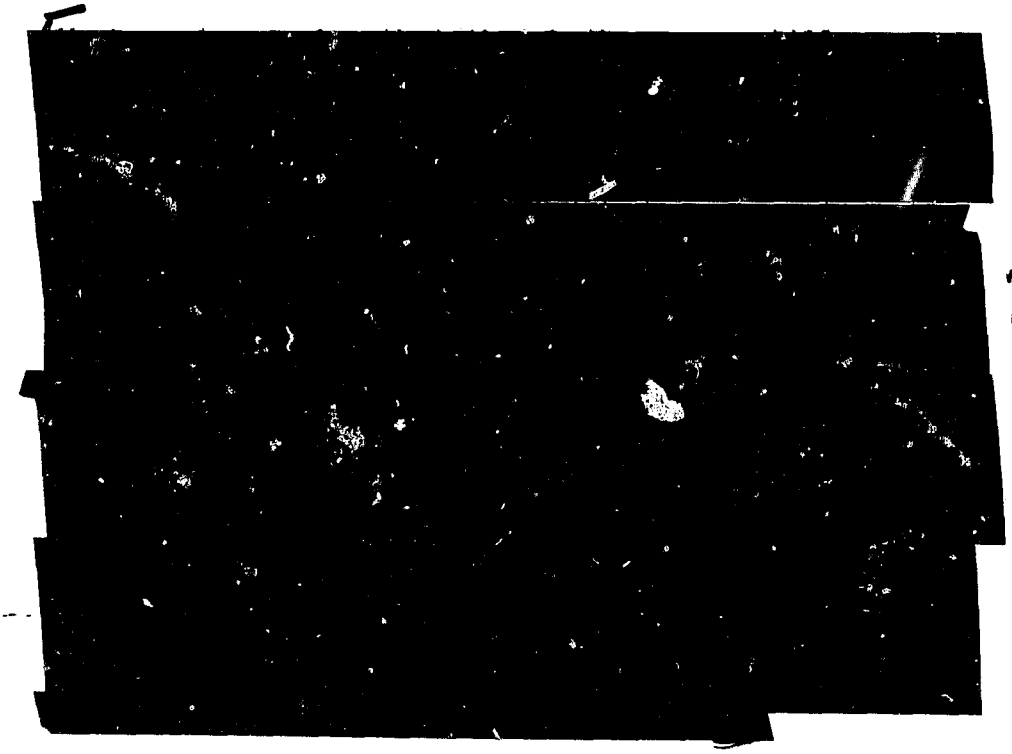
First issue, that of whether or not Leopold should remain in Belgium while his son rules for him, has not yet been clarified, but last minute reports suggest compromise will be reached, King not living in Brussels as PSC insist, but residing instead in his chateau at Cierngon in the Ardennes.



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Consultation among political leaders went on until midnight last night and continues today. We trust to be in position to send firmer news shortly.

MURPHY

BA:RWP